

Message Text

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73-60

ACTION PC-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 MED-03 MMS-03 PER-05 ABF-01 SP-03

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R 052148Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3104

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E O 11652 NA

TAGS NA

SUBJ: EXPANSION US PC STAFF--REGIONAL US PHYSICIAN

FOR PC, NICHOLAS W CRAW, ASSOCIATE DIR, IO, AND STATE DEPT ASST
SECY (ARA) SHLAUDEMAN

REF A. BOGOTA 4257 B. STATE 79143 C. BOGOTA 2866

1. IN REFTEL B PC WASHINGTON PROPOSES A REG MED ADVISOR TO BE
LOCATED IN BOGOTA. ACCORDING TO THE PC PROPOSAL THE REGIONAL
MED ADVISOR WOULD ACT AS SUPERVISOR OF COLOMBIAN NATIONAL
MED REFERRAL SYSTEMS AND ADVISOR TO COLOMBIAN PROJECTS IN HEALTH
DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION.

2. THIS IS NOT AS IT MIGHT APPEAR ON THE SURFACE A SIMPLE
ADMINISTRATIVE
CHANGE. PC DIRECTOR VILLALOBOS AND MED ADVISOR RAFAEL SAMPER
HAVE HAD THEIR DIFFERENCES IN THE PAST. THERE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY
FAULT ON BOTH SIDES STEMMING FROM DIFFERENCES IN STYLE, LACK
OF COMMUNICATION AND ONEST MISUNDERSTANDINGS. THE TWO MEN HAVE
WORKED OUT THEIR DIFFERENCES AND PC DIR VILLALOBOS TELLS ME HE
IS NOW CONVINCED THAT DR SAMPER IS DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB OF
CARING FOR THE HEALTH OF THE VOLUNTEERS. THERE THEREFORE APPEARS
TO BE NO VALID REASON TO UPSET THE PRESENT SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT
FROM THE STANDPOINT OF PROVIDING ADEQUATE MED SERVICES. IF HOWEVER,
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FOR OTHER ADMIN AND POLICY REASONS PC/W DECIDED IT WAS DESIRABLE
TO ESTABLISH A REG MED ARRANGEMENT AND TO SENT IN A US PHYSICIAN

TO DISPLACE SAMPER, BOTH POLIT AND IMAGE PROBLEMS COULD RESULT.

3. SAMPER IS INFLUENTIAL BOTH IN AND OUT OF MED CIRCLES AND HE PRIZES HIGHLY HIS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH PC. HE BELIEVES THAT HE HAS SERVED PC WELL AND HONORABLY AND THAT HE HAS PROVED TO EVERYONE'S SATISFACTION THAT ANY ACCUSATIONS REGARDING HIS MED COMPETENCE WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION, A POSITION WITH WHICH THE PC DIRECTOR AND THE DEPT OF STATE'S REG MED ADVISOR RESIDENT IN BOGOTA AGREE. WE COULD EXPECT A STRONG, SUSTAINED, AND IN GOOD PART JUSTIFIABLE, REACTION AGAINST HIS FORCED DEPARTURE FROM PC, AND A STRONG PUBLIC CHARGE BY HIM THAT SENDING A US PHYSICIAN HERE WAS MERELY A DEVICE TO JETTISON HIM.

4. THEREFORE AS I EXPLAINED IN REFTEL A, I AM NOT PREPARED TO ACCEDE TO ANY CHANGE IN THE PRESENT MED STAFFING SITUATION WITHOUT A FULL ON THE SPOT PROFESSIONAL EVAL AND RECOMMENDATION BY PC/W OFFICE OF MED AFFAIRS. I WOULD OF COURSE WANT TO EVAL ANY RECOMMENDATION AND IN CONCERT WITH YOU COME TO A FINAL DECISION.

5. SUCH AN EVAL SEEMS ALL THE MORE NECESSARY, BECAUSE IN ADDITION TO THE SAMPER PROBLEM, THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF UNPROVED ASSUMPTIONS IMPLIED IN PC/W'S PROPOSAL. FOR EXAMPLE IT IS DOUBTFUL IN THE EXTREME THAT ONE US PHYSICIAN COULD BOTH TAKE OVER SAMPER'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND STILL PERFORM IN ANY MEANINGFUL WAY AS REG MED OFFICER FOR CHILE, ECUADOR, PERU AND VENEZUELA. LIKEWISE IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WILL SAVE ANY MONEY. ON THE CONTRARY, IT MAY COST MORE. AT LEAST A PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION OF THE REQUIREMENTS IS NEEDED.

6. THEREFORE, I REITERATE WHAT I SAID IN MY CABLE OF MAY 15 (REFTEL A, TO WHICH I HAVE NOT RECEIVED A REPLY), NAMELY, THAT I HAVE NOT APPROVED A US PHYSICIAN BEING ADDED TO THE US MISSION STAFF IN COLOMBIA AND CANNOT DO SO WITHOUT A PROFESSIONAL MED EVAL WHICH WOULD INCLUDE FULL DISCUSSIONS WITH DR RAFAEL SAMPER. MOREOVER, GIVEN THE NEED TO MAKE A DECISION BY JUNE 30, TIME IS AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION. THEREFORE I RECOMMEND THAT WE RENEW THE MED SERVICES CONTRACT WITH DR SAMPER FOR ONE YEAR AND EXAMINE THIS WHOLE PROBLEM IN A MEASURED, PROFESSIONAL MANNER AND COME TO A DECISION FOR FY76.

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